

# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

N. F. B. Headquarters  
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## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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## ACTION ACROSS THE COUNTRY

The following pages dramatically tell the story of the new, stronger National Federation of the Blind fighting for the rights and welfare of blind Americans. The story is of victory, defeat and standoff across the country--with victories making up the major portion of the tale. This was the saga presented to the NFB's Phoenix Convention on its last morning, climaxed and integrated into a meaningful whole by the penetrating address of NFB President Russell Kletzing, "The State of Our Union."

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### ONE STEP FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK (Condensed)

By Beverly Gladden, Field Director  
California Council of the Blind

In 1960, the Governor appointed a Welfare Study Commission to investigate the problems of social welfare programs in California. No representative from a recipient group was appointed to this commission, which was composed primarily of county personnel. The Commission recommended that the Social Welfare Board be stripped of its functions of formulating policy, hearing appeals, and establishing uniform standards for the employment of social workers, and become an advisory board only. The legislature translated this recommendation into law and in September, 1963, the old board became extinct and the new board, or "nonboard," took over. Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, who had been a member of the Social Welfare Board for 13 years and its chairman for three, resigned from its impotent successor.

On the plus side, the California Council has scored some notable legislative victories. The two victories most illustrative of the Council's philosophy with regard to public assistance are the elimination of the requirement that relatives must contribute to the support of blind aid recipients and the elimination of the duration of residence requirement--victories won after two decades of effort. Thanks to a bill passed by the 1963 legislature, it is no longer possible for counties to exact a lien upon the property of an aid recipient for hospitalization. Though sponsored by the Council, all aid recipients benefited from the law. In 1961, the blind of California also obtained a guarantee of their right to organize, and a year later the Council was successful in obtaining a state official to work for the placement of blind and handicapped

employees in state civil service. Other gains included increased medical coverage for blind aid recipients and the establishment of a loan fund to assist blind persons in achieving self-support.

At the same (1962) session, a new Department of Rehabilitation was established. The Council had hoped that Services for the Blind would be placed in the Division for the Blind in the Social Welfare Department which has been sympathetic to the needs of the blind under its able chief, Perry Sundquist. Instead these services were placed in the new Rehabilitation Department whose top officials, except for the director who came from another state, had been antagonistic to the Council and to independent organizations of the blind. Although a separate unit had been created in the department covering services to the blind, it appears there are ominous symptoms that the needs of the blind may be swallowed up in the greater volume of needs of other handicapped groups.

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#### TWIN VICTORIES (Condensed)

By Don Capps, President  
South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind

After a substantial struggle, vending stand operators in South Carolina, I am happy to report, are no longer subject to having part of their income set aside to finance the vending stand program. In obtaining this legislation, we obtained excellent stories in newspapers which were doubtless read by the legislators. Also, we sent every member of the legislature a special brochure setting forth the reasons for eliminating the set-aside. In our whole campaign, we were tremendously assisted the national officers of the Federation in developing facts and figures for our case. These statistics showed the very low income the stand operators in our state enjoyed in relation to other states. Thanks to the removal of the set-aside, this will now be somewhat improved.

Aid to the blind in our state has also been far below that which was needed. We began looking into this when the Federation executive committee urged each state to ascertain whether federal funds had been passed on to aid recipients. Our investigation showed that funds appropriated by the legislature had not been utilized by the social welfare department to provide aid to the blind in a number of recent years, and that a substantial amount of federal funds had been lost to

South Carolina as a result. Again, newspaper publicity was an important aid in rectifying this situation. As a result of this and of conferences with state officials, the aid grants now being paid to the blind have been raised very substantially.

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## THE AGENCY THAT DIDN'T UNDERSTAND (Condensed)

By Manuel Rubin, President  
Associated Blind of Massachusetts

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has always been in the forefront in social welfare. Her concern about her blind citizens is especially impressive. Those of our people who cannot work receive the highest average grant in the United States. Our people who work in the State-operated shops receive more than \$65.00 a week, tax free, and a retirement pension of seventy-five percent. Our home owners receive a \$3,000 real estate tax exemption, and we also have a \$2,000 State income tax exemption.

Our vending stand program is among the best in the country. The Massachusetts Division of the Blind builds and stocks the stand, trains the operator, and then turns the stand over to him completely with no set-aside requirements or any other strings attached.

The Massachusetts Association for the Adult Blind was the first private agency for the blind in the United States, organized around the turn of the century. It now operates Sunlight House, a resort where blind people from all over the State may spend a two-week summer vacation; maintains a small loan fund to assist blind persons for emergency or business purposes, and conducts many other worthwhile functions.

However, the Massachusetts Association needed new worlds to conquer. Other groups and agencies had taken over many of its activities, and it had to justify its existence. It was discovered several years ago that Federal funds were available if the right project could be found. A juicy grant was there just for the plucking.

The project which the Association picked was to demonstrate that blind people could be served better in many instances by general agencies rather than by special agencies for the blind--"human" needs as against blind needs. Of course this played right into the hands of Health,

Education, and Welfare; it would help to justify Title XVI of the Social Security Act. One hundred and forty thousand dollars of federal funds were allotted to the Massachusetts Association to conduct this project over a three-year period.

We of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts were entirely unaware of the project until an article appeared in the Boston GLOBE. We were astounded when we read it, because we saw in this project great danger to our people. The work of decades was in peril.

It is notable that, of the staff named to carry out the project, not a single blind person is on the list!

It is our contention that human needs are so bound up with blindness that they cannot be separated, and that a blind person can best be served by specially trained workers who have studied, and know at first hand the problems associated with blindness.

The Massachusetts Association is powerful, but you may be sure that we shall leave no stone unturned to see that our people will not be left to the mercies of uninterested and uninformed general agencies.

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### THE RIGHT TO TEACH (Condensed)

By Nancy Smalley, President  
Educational Organization of the Blind, Los Angeles

Although there are more than forty blind teachers in public schools in California, several of the larger cities in our state, including the city of Los Angeles, categorically refuse to consider blind applicants for teaching positions. They maintain this position despite a law passed nearly twenty years ago through the efforts of the California Council of the Blind, which eliminates visual acuity requirements for teaching.

At our convention last fall, the Council resolved to make every effort to open the schools of Los Angeles to qualified blind teachers. The first step was a hearing before the City Board of Education at which Jim McGinnis, Council president, and working blind teachers presented the case. The Board, however, referred the matter to its personnel committee. While we were preparing written answers to questions propounded by this committee, it made a survey of all of the



blind teachers in public schools in California.

This survey is the most convincing, objective evidence yet developed as to the effectiveness of qualified blind persons to teach in the public schools. Nonetheless, there have been more questions and more delays. For several months we have been waiting for the personnel committee to make recommendations to the Board, but our patience is not inexhaustable. If our calm, reasoned approach is not effective soon, we are determined to take action in a more direct way. The seriousness of our purpose is indicated by the direction of our state convention that steps be taken, including picketing if necessary, to call this situation to the attention of the public and to overcome this illegal discrimination against blind teachers.

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#### STRUGGLE AGAINST ODDS (Condensed)

By Pauline Gomez, President  
New Mexico Federation of the Blind

This is the story of our effort to procure an orientation center for the blind. The fact that the voice of the blind was heard for the first time by the twenty-sixth state legislature galvanized agency personnel to protect their present program and prevent any future organized activity. The legislation we sponsored last year created a committee to study the possibilities for an orientation center, and also resulted in bringing our program for the blind under formal observation.

The first meeting of the interim legislative committee was dominated by the state agencies, assisted by the field representative of the American Foundation for the Blind; but the committee nevertheless decided to survey the adequacy of existing state programs for the blind. After the hearing, the NMFB sent a letter to each of the committee members posing pointed questions as to the attitudes and actions of state agencies.

The second meeting of the interim committee was called on January 17 of this year. We were reinforced not only with experience but with testimony from blind persons, concrete reports and films from the Iowa and California orientation centers, testimony from members of the Lions Clubs, favorable interest from The Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped--and best of all, the leadership of a star general, our national president Russell Kletzing.

During the waiting period before the next meeting, we have not been idle and we have reason to rejoice over a few conquests: The NFB's own Kenneth Jernigan was invited by the Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped to be a featured speaker at a regional conference held here, and we had a successful state convention with a small group of loyal members ready to continue our climb.

We realize, as Federationists, that we will reach the end of our venture only when we have together broken through the walls of misconception and prejudice which have influenced our education and welfare for centuries.

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#### A STUDY IN STATE AND NATIONAL TEAMWORK (Condensed)

By Rogers Smith, Vice President & Legislative  
Chairman, Alabama Federation of the Blind

When we began planning improvements to Alabama's aid to the blind program, stimulated by Dr. tenBroek's visit to our state convention, it was one of the most poorly written aid laws in the country--and its grants to recipients were among the smallest. The National Federation drafted legislation completely reforming our program. The bill provided for a minimum grant plus additional allowances for actual needs in excess of this amount. It also established the residence requirement at one year, allowed an aid recipient to own his home and up to \$6,200 in property, along with necessary personal effects. It also provided that there should be no lien for repayment of the aid grant of hospitalization against property of a recipient, and eliminated the responsibility of relatives.

After its introduction, an analysis of the legislation was sent to the members of the Alabama Federation. More than thirty blind people appeared at the legislative hearings, and the bill was passed unanimously by both houses.

Almost immediately after its passage, the state welfare board, backed up by personnel from federal agencies, claimed that our new law had hurt the blind rather than helped them. The National Federation joined with us in routing this counterattack. An analysis of the bill, prepared by the NFB, was inserted in the Congressional Record by our distinguished Senator, Lister Hill, and this was of great weight in countering state agency arguments. Also, an opinion of the Attorney

General early this year fully supported the interpretation we in the National Federation placed on the bill.

Proof of the pudding, however, is in the aid checks. After only eight months, the average grant in Alabama has increased by \$14.00, a gain of more than twenty-five percent.

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## THE STATE OF OUR UNION

By Russell Kletzing

(Editor's Note: The following article by the president of the National Federation of the Blind is a slightly abridged version of a presidential report delivered before the NFB's annual convention at Phoenix, Arizona, on June 3, 1964.)

One of the most exciting and significant events of the National Federation's July convention at Phoenix--on a program well-packed with excitement and significance--was a series of five resounding reports from an many states, narrating five episodes of contemporary history. Taken together these reports gave the convention a cross-sectional view of the progress Federationists across the country are making through their state organizations toward the fulfillment of our common goals.

In some of the states the degree of progress has been spectacular; in some it has been modest; and in some it has been mixed with elements of retrogression. But in all cases there has been progress--and in every case it has been self-initiated and self-sustained, the forward movement of self-propulsion and independent direction, the advance which springs from collective self-organization and the united will of Federationists not just to work but to work together.

These successive reports on the union of our states--from California, New Mexico, South Carolina, Alabama, and Massachusetts--constituted in effect a report on the state of our union. They spelled out in large and luminous letters the intimate relationship that exists between the actions of our state affiliates and those of the National Federation of the Blind.

Let me take a moment to summarize the gist of these five separate stories of state achievement and struggle, not so much for themselves as for the moral and the momentum which they illustrate.

The California story, reported by Jim McGinnis and Nancy Smalley, presented a very mixed picture of advance on one front counterbalanced by frustration and stalemate on another: specifically, of great progress in welfare legislation vitiated by obstruction in welfare administration and in the field of rehabilitation. But their report demonstrated that, if all is not quiet on our western front, thanks to the work of the California Council of the Blind many more battles are being won in that sector than have been lost.

The news from New Mexico was still more heartening. Pauline Gomez graphically described the amazing progress which has been made in that state toward the realization of a vision, in the form of an orientation center for the blind. Through the patient and persistent efforts of the New Mexico Federation and the National Federation that dream is on the way to becoming reality--in the face of stubborn and senseless opposition by the agencies of the state. Today the theme-song of New Mexico is: We came, we envisioned, we collaborated, we shall conquer.

Next the convention heard from Don Capps of the harvest being reaped in South Carolina as a result of seeds carefully sown and cultivated by the organized blind of that state. Among the triumphs of the Aurorans is a vastly improved vending stand law and the securing of new federal funds for the blind--again in the teeth of administrative harassment and hostility.

Fourth, we heard from Rogers Smith just how it happens that stars fall on Alabama. The passage of the new aid to the blind law in that state, hiking the cash grant by ten dollars and providing for special needs, makes an astonishing tale of triumph on the part of the organized blind after years of obstruction and obfuscation by both national and state administrative authorities.

Finally, Manny Rubin gave the convention an account of the interminable and baffling problem posed for the Associated Blind of Massachusetts in the form of a private agency utterly incapable of understanding the unique and distinctive characteristics of blindness and the blind--thereby tragically confusing the vital objective of integrating blind people into the community with the very different proposition of integrating and scrambling services for the blind with those for other recipients of aid.

These were then very diverse and different reports, based upon the special experiences and conflicts of five state organizations in as many sections of the land. But their differences could not obscure their underlying similarity--the overriding goals they share together and the values which they hold in common. Let us see if we can identify more exactly the core issues which bind together these several stories and several states, and how they relate to the long-term policies and philosophy of the National Federation.

I should like to begin by restating, without apology, what is familiar to us all--namely, the fundamental commitments and purposes of the National Federation and its affiliates. In my view these may be summarized in six points. First of these is the goal of full education and effective orientation for all blind people. Second is the aim of educating and informing the wider public with respect to the capabilities as well as the disabilities of the blind. Third is the theme of public assistance--of aid to the blind under social security--and its positive redirection along the paths of rehabilitation and vocational opportunity. Fourth is the great objective of employment--full employment of all adult blind persons of productive age, and normal competitive employment where blindness is not complicated by advanced age or multiple disability. Fifth is the omnipresent problem and challenge of our relationships with the agencies, both public and private, whose concern is with the welfare of the blind. Sixth and last is the principle of organized and concerted activity of blind people, by blind people, for blind people.

We of the National Federation want every blind child and adult, to the extent that he desires it, to have the most complete education of which he is capable. We want the public to know, to understand and to promote the capabilities of blind men and women. We want the government to provide, not the ends of life, but only the means of living--the floor of security and the base of opportunity which is all that the organized blind have ever asked or will ask of their society. We want every blind person who is able and willing to work to have his fair and equal chance at a job that makes full use of his skills and talent. We want to work closely and cooperatively, in carrying out these tasks, with the agencies in the field whose objectives and philosophy run parallel to ours; and to this end we hope to convert the unconverted agencies, and we pledge to maintain active pressure against those beyond conversion or redemption. Most of all we want these things not just for ourselves, not for blind Federationists alone nor even for blind Americans exclusively--but for the brotherhood of blind people the world over, for the coming International Federation of the Blind.

However furious the battles we have fought and will surely fight again over the enforcement of these goals, no one is likely to quarrel with them in principle--for they are no more than a restatement for the blind of the keystone articles of the democratic faith. Like liberty itself we hold these goals to be unalienable. They are the birthright of all free men, whether American or Asian, Buddhist or Christian, blind or sighted.

We also know from hard experience, however, that these rights of blind people can be alienated and that these truths are not self-evident to all in government, in the agencies, and in the public at large. We know that their enactment and enforcement requires insistence and persistence on the part of all of us--in Washington, in the state capitals, and in the communities of the land. In short, our ends can only be attained together--by united and coordinated action at all levels of association and action. I recall the pertinent pronouncement of Edmund Burke on the alternatives of hanging together or hanging separately. "When bad men combine," said Burke, "the good must associate; else they will surely fall, one by one, unpitied sacrifices in a contemptible struggle." Let us then get associated and stay associated, in all our mutual tasks and common aspirations.

Let us look a little harder at each of the six points in our platform. First is the education of the blind. It is an accepted axiom today that every blind person--man, woman or child--should have full opportunity to undertake all the schooling and training he may wish and can handle. It was not always thus, of course; the traditional schools for the blind, with their separate facilities and limited curriculum, were among the early milestones on the long road to equality. But today the importance of adequate education is more urgent than ever; there is a direct and unblinkable correlation between the level of a man's education and the height of his opportunity for advancement.

In our day blind children are educated for the most part either in residential schools for the blind or in regular schools with special resource classes. That old-time controversy as to which is the superior system has lost its vitality, for the simple reason that both are here to stay. The residential schools now mainly serve those blind children from areas where the population is too sparse to justify a resource class, along with others whom family care has rendered too dependent to function immediately in a public school setting, and also (increasingly) those youngsters whose

emotional instability or mental limitations prevent their attending public schools. More blind children are being absorbed into the public schools with resource classes because of the strong desire of parents to keep their children at home with the family.

The important question, of course, is not whether a blind child attends a residential school or a regular school, but whether he attends a good school. On this point it is noteworthy that our local and state chapters have accomplished much to improve both kinds of school. Again and again they have spearheaded efforts to secure adequate financial support for both. They have mobilized blind residents to demand the transfer of residential schools to better locations and to separate them from schools for the deaf, where the scrambling of teaching methods has worked to the disadvantage of both deaf and blind students. Our chapters have also sponsored legislation to obtain better equipment and have directly purchased braille writers and other materials for many integrated classes. In several cases, state affiliates of the Federation have fought for and won the elimination of harsh and senseless treatment of blind students by incompetent teachers and administrators. Organizations of the blind have worked together nationally and in the states to secure qualified teachers, and have accomplished much to spread the radical idea that well-trained and equipped blind teachers are a source not only of good formal instruction but of informal rehabilitation and renewed self-confidence among their blind students. In all these ways and more, the National Federation has been instrumental in bringing about a steady advance in the quality and performance of schooling for the blind.

Education, to be sure, is not limited to formal studies in the schools; it embraces also the process of learning to live with blindness, of adjusting to and surmounting the physical and social handicap--in a word, of orientation. Although the processes of orientation and education go hand in hand, the success of both rests upon the ability of blind persons themselves to resist and repudiate the false stereotypes surrounding blindness which still circulate in the wider society. Blind persons must first come to understand what blindness is, and what it is not, before they can move with independence and assurance through the social mainstream--instead of remaining, in the words of the poet, "alone and afraid in a world they never made."

Nothing can so effectively enable a blind person to find himself and to find his way in the wider world than a good orientation center. But, it is not enough for this purpose that the buildings be

modern, the equipment up to date and the staff properly trained. What is essential is that the orientation center be imbued with the spirit of opportunity not of limitation, of abilities and possibilities not of lacks and losses. Let me emphasize this point as emphatically as I can; millions of dollars are being wasted in salaries and equipment for institutions ostensibly dedicated to orientation whose atmosphere and attitudes can produce only disorientation. But now we know that it need not be so - for we have before us the outstanding examples of the state orientation centers in Iowa and California, the former sparked by the genius and Federationism of Kenneth Jernigan.

One final word on this crucial matter of education. No agency, institution or device has yet been developed for the enlightenment and self-advancement of blind persons than their own democratic associations--local, state and national. In learning about each other we learn from each other--and we learn about ourselves. If we in the National Federation are not precisely a mutual admiration society, we are surely a mutual orientation society. When the blind lead the blind, to amend an old parable, all shall rise out of the ditch!

Education of the blind, then--through residential and public schools, through orientation centers, and through the activities of our own democratic organizations--constitutes the first plank in our sixfold platform of goals to be achieved. The second plank is closely related--it is the task of educating the wider public to the true capabilities of blind people, not to their plight but to their powers, not to their pitiable condition but to their potential contribution. It is the task of leading an intellectual and emotional revolution, which will erase old prejudices and superstitions in favor of affirmative attitudes of acceptance and equality. Until the ancient shibboleths surrounding the blind man are utterly washed away, normal opportunity and participation in society will remain exceptional rather than conventional for those who are blind.

The National Federation and its affiliates in the states have worked systematically to bring about the new climate of understanding--and the signs are multiplying that our efforts have borne fruit. Over the years we have told our story and presented our case through all the media of press, radio and television--through speeches, panels, interviews, news features and magazine articles, talks to civic groups, and a vast variety of Federation-sponsored educational and informative literature. I need hardly tell you that a



significant feature of nearly every state convention with national participation has been the strong use of local news outlets to spread the truth about blindness as well as the facts about the blind organizations and persons involved.

State affiliates and local chapters are in the best possible position to step up the flow of information to the general public. For it is a fact that people everywhere are sympathetic toward, and interested in, the problems and triumphs of blind people. Our chapters can stimulate and satisfy this interest by making available to the press straightforward stories about their people and their deeds. Another device of proven effectiveness is the pictorial brochure, which can tell the same human-interest story in graphic terms and circulate it through thousands of hands. A great expansion of all these efforts is needed at all levels of our organization--and such an expansion will take place at the national level as rapidly as our resources permit.

The blind need not only the good will of the public; they also need its assistance. That suggests the third of our goals for the future: the consolidation and improvement of public assistance. The purposes of public assistance for the blind are twofold--to provide a floor of material security, and to furnish the incentives to vocational opportunity. Since it is the latter purpose which is the more productive in the long run, let us take a look at the familiar contention that public assistance at its best does not encourage but discourages job efforts by recipients. The basic reply to this shibboleth is, of course, that the experience of blind people as a group has given the lie to it. No doubt there are exceptions; but the cases are few indeed in which a blind person would not greatly improve his financial situation by holding down a job in competitive employment. There is more to it than that, however; blind people are as deeply motivated as any others to fulfill the demands of our way of life by earning their own bread and standing on their own feet--and they are just as frustrated as any others by the lack of opportunity to do so.

Let us admit that there may be some blind persons who would rather remain on public assistance than do a day's work. But before we assume that this passivity reflects mere laziness and lack of character, let us ask whether such an attitude may not disguise a deepseated fear of failure, an acceptance of the antique image of the helpless blind man, a breakdown of confidence and will which bespeaks a prior failure of adjustment and orientation.

this is the kind of fear brought on by years of frustration, idleness and insecurity, which is surely best combatted not by condemning public assistance but by redirecting both the aid program and the energies of the aid recipient toward the goals of self-sufficiency and self-support.

In this struggle to reorient the public assistance programs around productive and progressive goals, the National Federation has been a prime mover. The principle of exempt earnings, long a pillar of our philosophy, has come to be firmly established in federal law. As a result of our persistent and pioneering efforts, every state must now allow a blind recipient to keep the first \$85 he makes without reducing his grant--and for earnings above that amount the grant is reduced by 50¢ per dollar earned until full self-support has been reached. This is perhaps the most important amendment ever made in the public assistance programs of Social Security during the 30-year history of the Act, providing a definite financial incentive to the goals of self-support and self-care officially written into the law eight years ago.

We may note in passing that our leadership on this front, once that of a lonely advance guard opposed and vilified by some of the most prominent agencies in the field, has at long last earned tacit recognition even from our old foes. No less a figure than Dr. Eveline Burns, high-ranking authority of the American Public Welfare Association, has now come out strongly for the very goals and policies for which the Federation has stood, in splendid isolation, for the past three decades. The philosophy of public aid which not long ago was castigated as irresponsible and impracticable has now become acceptable (if not quite official) doctrine at conventions of the nation's welfare officialdom.

There are other constructive developments, as you know, on the public assistance front. Federal law has been changed to protect permanently the Missouri and Pennsylvania programs which, by allowing aid largely without reference to a means test, have set a pattern for a progressive grant program for the blind. Our current legislative program seeks to gain permission for other states to follow this precedent without the loss of federal funds. Again, within the last five years the amount of federal matching funds to the states for aid to the blind has been increased by nine dollars per month; this too has promoted a psychology consistent with job-seeking. But in many states the increase has not been passed on to blind recipients; and only through continued effective

action by our affiliates can we hope to see the intent of Congress realized that such increases are for the benefit not of the state treasury but of the needy blind recipient.

In the midst of this progress an alarming note has been struck by the adoption of the infamous Title XVI--the Social Security Amendment of 1962 which encourages the states to merge blind aid with aid to the aged and disabled. The indiscriminate scrambling of these three dissimilar groups together, in the name of "integration," can only obstruct the actual integration of blind citizens into their community--for the blind are both a smaller group and a distinct one from the standpoint of their welfare needs. The issue is urgent; for the shadow of this ominous title is spreading across the land--as in Illinois, where the axe of Title XVI has fallen upon the blind and their monthly aid grant has already plummeted by more than \$7.50--and as in California and Massachusetts, where the same false pattern of administrative merger has begun to threaten other programs for the blind.

This critical battle must be joined by all of us, nationally and in the states. Every affiliate must fight to prevent its legislature and welfare department from succumbing to the lure of the new title, with its siren provision for an increase in medical care payments. We must recognize that once a state has gone down that road of Title XVI, there is no turning back--it can never again decide to restore any of the three programs as separate categories. Meanwhile the blind of the nation must unite to gain congressional relief--in the form of amendments which will (1) allow the same medical benefits under the old system of separate categories, (2) preserve separate administration and standards for aid to the blind even if the program is transferred to Title XVI, and (3) extend the provision now enjoyed by four states of keeping their blind programs intact under Title XVI by virtue (if it is a virtue) of having a single commission for the blind. We shall need a massive and united effort by the blind people of the states and the nation to win this struggle--but on its outcome depends our independence and survival as a recipient group in welfare.

I have dwelt on the issues of public assistance because of their great and immediate urgency. But in the long run the paramount need of the blind is not so much for social security as for economic opportunity--in a word, for jobs. This has long been the target of our major artillery and strategy; and if we have not yet won the war of full employment for our people we have emerged victorious

from a succession of decisive battles. You all remember the Federation's success over 15 years ago in securing the law which ended discrimination against blind applicants in the civil service and led--through the case of Kletzing v Civil Service Commission--to the voluntary opening up of the federal civil service to more and more blind applicants. Our latest victory, won with the full cooperation of the civil service commission, is the new law allowing blind employees of the government to hire their own readers, thereby vastly widening the range of positions which the blind may perform as well as easing the burden of their performance. And between these two landmark victories the Federation played an instrumental role in encouraging the use of blind persons as switchboard operators by the federal government, by other agencies and by private industry.

I have alluded several times in the course of this discussion to our relationships with the other agencies, private and public, in the field of blind welfare. It will come as no surprise to you who know our organizational history that point number five in our six-point agenda for the future is the persisting problem of effective working relations--nationally and in the states--with these welfare organizations. By and large the agencies for the blind avow much the same set of goals as we do. They too seek educational and employment opportunities, and the reduction of public prejudice and misunderstanding. Yet here precisely is the paradox; for agency personnel themselves are much too often the unwitting victims of the very stereotypes and misconceptions concerning the blind which they are formally organized to wipe out. Only on this hypothesis can we explain the resistance and even hostility of many agencies to the efforts of the organized blind to improve their own lot. Only this can explain the huge expenditures and exertions to shore up the crumbling structures of sheltered workshops and custodial lighthouses whose relation to the goal of independence is plainly negative where it is not wholly destructive. It is not so much that agency workers and administrators are "against" the blind; it is rather that they are often content to be for the blind without the will or willingness to move with them. And that is what we must rekindle and reactivate in these good people: faith in the capacities of the clients whom they serve, faith in themselves as companions and colleagues but not caretakers, and faith in the common cause of all organizations and agencies laboring for the welfare of the blind.

This brings us finally, by a roundabout route, to the sixth and last of the basic policy objectives of the National Federation of the

Blind. It is that of collective action by the blind themselves-- locally, nationally and internationally. During the past quarter of a century, the reforms and advances in programming for the blind have been brought about primarily by organizations of the blind themselves. Others have assisted us; but their assistance has too often been compromised or vitiated by negative attitudes and outright opposition to the tide and titles of our movement. It is the blind themselves who have been most consistent and persistent in pressing for the prerogatives of citizenship and the rights of free men.

That battle is far from won; it rages many fronts and at all levels of organization and opposition. The pressure must be maintained nationally, at the center of federal power and legislation; and we shall continue in the future as in the past to exert that positive pressure at all the key points of the federal system. But because of the very nature of the federal union in which we live, to be effective we must take action at the state level. Some of the affiliates most successful in legislation have been very small; but the appeal of the blind is not to power nor to passion but to logic and good sense. Our numbers are modest and our voting potential scarcely imposing; but the battle, as Patrick Henry observed, is not always to the strong--it is also to the vigilant and the righteous. Our cause is just and our case reasonable; and when our views have been clearly set forth to the lawmakers, they have generally been heard with sympathy and frequently acted upon with favor.

All state organizations should take action in the legislative arena to promote job opportunities for the blind; and the first step toward this end is to establish a legislative program. Although some states have made substantial progress with only a small number of actively participating members, it remains true that the greater the number of those committed to the effort, the greater the chances of success. Moreover, the development of a dynamic program will draw active blind persons into the organization-- and coupled with intelligent public information it can galvanize community energies behind the movement. The experience of a generation has demonstrated that once a clearcut and progressive program has been formulated and broadcast by an alert and united organization of blind people, there is little on earth or beneath it that can stay it from success.

Let us remind ourselves, finally, that it is not merely organization that we celebrate, but self-organization. And it is not self-

organization alone that we affirm, but the self-organization of historically disorganized and dependent persons. The record of almost a quarter century of voluntary association--more, of federation--by the blind men and women of America is a chronicle of struggle. We have taken arms against a sea of troubles--and if we have not ended them, we have made undeniable and unprecedented progress. We have gained enormously in strength, in confidence, in allies, and I believe in wisdom. We are united now as we have not been in many years. If it is too much to say that all our wounds have been healed and all our quarrels reconciled, it is not too much to say that the worst is far behind us--and the best is yet to come. But it will come to us only if we go out to meet it--with confidence in our cause, in our fellows, and in ourselves.

It may be true that they also serve who only stand and wait; but it is equally true that they alone win who move forward and work together. Let us then get on with our great work.

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## INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BLIND INAUGURATED

The world's blind people are joining hands across the seas in an historic attempt to bring their combined talents and resources to bear upon the solution of common problems.

The International Federation of the Blind, a new and unprecedented organization representing nations in various parts of the world, was officially inaugurated July 30 in New York City at a charter meeting of delegates and prospective members.

Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, founder and longtime leader of the U. S. National Federation of the Blind, was unanimously elected president of the IFB. Rienzi Alagiyawanna of Ceylon was named first vice president, and Dr. Fatima Shah of Pakistan was chosen as second vice president. Additional officers and members of the executive committee will be selected in the near future.

Present at the founding convocation were delegates from India, France, Malaysia, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Ceylon, Pakistan and the United States. Representatives of blind organizations in numerous other countries were also present as observers and

expressed their desire to join the IFB following formal approval by their national groups.

Preliminary steps toward formation of the global federation, whose membership is restricted to organizations of the blind, had been taken earlier in the month during the Pheonix convention of the National Federation. At a special meeting held following the convention banquet, the Federation's many foreign guests resolved to proceed with the establishment of a world organization of blind people and named a provisional committee to carry out the decision.

Leaders of the International Federation have emphasized that the all-blind organization does not seek to rival or replace the already-existing World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, regarded as predominantly an association of social agencies in the field of work for the blind.

It is anticipated that the International Federation will strengthen and supplement the WCWB's valuable functions of facilitating exchange of technical information and co-ordinating the work of agencies in various countries, in addition to bringing to bear the united efforts of organized blind groups throughout the world in programs of direct action toward the improvement of their own condition.

The inauguration of the worldwide blind federation drew prominent attention from newspapers across the country, largely through publication of an Associated Press feature interview with President tenBroek.

The news agency dispatch from New York City said that "the blind are uniting in a world federation to show that the blind can lead the blind," and quoted Dr. tenBroek as saying "the blind of the world ought to speak for themselves on their problems."

The newly-elected IFB president added that the world federation "will formulate solutions and propose them to various governments."

"One point he has been pressing is a sweeping 'reorganization of public assistance so as to take the blind off relief, put them into employment and do away with custodial institutions,'" the AB said.

"Dr. tenBroek objects to the traditional attitudes of treating

the blind as incompetent to determine or administer their own affairs. This, he said, "is one of the bitterest pills we have to swallow. "

"The aim, he said, is to prove that if the blind lead the blind, both shall not fall into the ditch. "

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## PREAMBLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND CONSTITUTION SETS GOALS

(Editor's Note: The following is the preamble and statement of purposes adopted as part of the Constitution of the International Federation of the Blind.)

The International Federation of the Blind is the blind people of the world speaking for themselves--acting in concert for their mutual advancement and more effective participation in the affairs of their respective nations.

The International Federation of the Blind is an organization of the blind of all nations, operated by the blind of all nations, for the blind of all nations. It is an educational and fraternal association, nonprofit and nonpolitical in character, dedicated solely to serving the common needs and aspirations of blind men and women everywhere in the world.

We join in this common cause to:

Cooperate with the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind in achieving its objective of providing the means of consultation between organizations of and for the blind in different countries.

Encourage self-organization and self-determination by blind people in all countries through their own voluntary associations, joined together in turn by membership in the International Federation.

Serve as a world assembly for meetings, communication and interchange among blind persons of all nationalities, toward the end of reinforcing their confidence in themselves, in each other, and in their common cause.



Provide a forum for collective self-expression and discussion by the blind of the world, and to act as the articulate voice for their joint decisions and common objectives.

Work for the progressive improvement and modernization, throughout the world, of public policies and practices governing the education, health, welfare, rehabilitation and employment of the blind.

Disseminate accurate information, increase knowledge and promote enlightened attitudes on the part of the peoples of the world toward blind persons.

Solicit the support of national governments everywhere for the programs and policies of the organized world blind, and advise and assist those governments in their implementation.

Furnish a beacon for the underprivileged and disadvantaged blind people of the earth--and create a potent symbol through which blind people everywhere seek the rights and opportunities that are the birthright of all men.

Stand as living proof to the essential normality, equality, and capability of blind men and women as first-class citizens of the world as well as of their individual nations.

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## MONITOR MINIATURES

Sarah Telson, totally blind, is employed at the United Nations as a professional assistant in the rehabilitation unit, Bureau of Social Affairs. . . . The annual state convention of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts will be held on September 26 and 27 at the Lawrence Holiday Inn, Lawrence, Massachusetts. . . . Cheaply made foreign brooms imported from Mexico and Iron Curtain countries are given as the justification for protective legislation currently before Congress. In the last year, according to V. C. Struve, vice president and general manager of the Deshler Broom Factory, Inc., five million brooms have been imported, nearly one fifth of the American corn broom usage. Two hundred American broom factories have closed their doors since 1960. (Extension of remarks of Hon. Ralph F. Beermann of Nebraska, House of Representatives, Congressional Record, July 2, 1964.) . . .

Among the nineteen projects receiving a total of \$1.5 million from a new program of federal research grants, the American Speech and Hearing Association in Washington, D. C. receives \$28,295 to survey all speech and hearing facilities in the United States to determine current practices and needs for research in important aspects of hearing aid evaluation procedures. ... The Kentucky Federation of the blind has begun the publication in mimeographed form of a news bulletin. Those interested should contact R. E. Whitehead, president, P. O. Box 1375, Louisville, Kentucky 40201. ... The 1964 state convention of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind will be held at the Kentucky Hotel in Louisville on September 17, 18, and 19. ... Taking office in September are the newly-elected officers of the Associated Blind of Greater Lawrence, Massachusetts: Victor Jedrey, president; William Kolenda, vice president; Josephine Benoit, recording secretary; Dominic Fiato, corresponding secretary; Shaban Numan, financial secretary; John Borrelli, treasurer; Paul Lasonde and Mario Sapienza, members of the executive board.

During his visit to Missouri following the NFB Phoenix convention, Rienzi Alagiyawanna, our blind visitor from Ceylon, met with former President Truman at the Truman Library in Independence. Rienzi presented him with an ancient book from a buddhist temple written on palm leaves. Mr. Truman was delighted and after examining the work, decided it was of such high value that it should be placed in the Missouri University library in order that language students might have the privilege of studying it. ... Robert Russell, blind associate professor of English at Franklin Marshall College, is author of an article in the August issue of the Atlantic Monthly entitled "Pike Fishing by Bell." Mr. Russell reports on how a blind man learns how to go out fishing alone in a boat on the St. Lawrence River, having rigged up a bell system to guide his direction and distance from shore. ... Hope for diabetes victims has been symbolized by the June opening of a new world center for diabetes research in Boston. The million-dollar research laboratory, jointly directed by the Harvard Medical School and the Diabetes Foundation, Inc., will investigate causes and cures for the disease which is one of the nation's leading causes of blindness. ...

Hubert Smock, long active in the Iowa Association of the Blind, suffered a severe heart attack in early June at his Iowa City home, according to a report in the I.A.B. BULLETIN. Smock had served for five years as a home teacher with the Iowa Commission for the

Blind, and was a state delegate in 1959 to the National Federation convention at Santa Fe. ... A new Veterans Administration facility presently being built in the District of Columbia will be named the Melvin J. Maas Memorial Hospital if a pending bill is passed by Congress. Major General Maas was chairman of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped for 10 years until his death in April of this year. ... A 12-year-old blind boy from Virginia Beach, Stephen Damon, will be among those taking part in the annual All-American Soap Box Derby this year, reports LISTEN, in a car he himself has built and equipped with a radio-operated helmet to receive directions on the way down the hill. ...

A blind New York City businessman, operator of a telephone marketing firm and a new firm designed to manage conventions for organizations, was the subject recently of a syndicated "Life Begins at Forty" newspaper column published across the country. He is Al Sperber, who lost his sight eight years ago from detached retinas. ... Ed (Strangler) Lewis, famed pro wrestling champion of a generation ago, has become blind for the second time in his life, according to a NEW YORK TIMES report. Now 75, the former athletic great was first blinded by trachoma at the height of his career, regained sight after several years, and again became blind in 1961 after 30 years of recovered vision. ... Robert Rodriquez, a blind student at New York City College, has made "A" grades in all but three of his 29 courses at the college over the past three years, according to LISTEN. He plans to go on for a Ph.D. at Georgetown University and a career in the foreign policy field. ...

Bob Whitehead, energetic president of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind, has been appointed by Governor Breathitt as a member of a statewide advisory committee on problems of the blind. ... The Kentucky NEWS BULLETIN reports that the Howe Press has now acquired electronic IBM equipment similar to that being used in Louisville to speed the braille process. ... According to an article in the Chicago TRIBUNE, Dr. Peter Putnam has reported that a survey of blind college students (based on a sample of 1,000) indicates an average grade of B or better, higher than the national average for all college students. ... The annual reunion of the Alumni Association of Kentucky's School for the Blind, held in June, elected Nina Coyle as president. ...

A bill to provide free air transportation for anyone acting as a guide for a blind person was unanimously passed by the U. S.

House of Representatives August 13. Sponsored by California Congressman J. Arthur Younger, the bill was suggested by a former Pacific Airlines captain, who had been shot through the eyes by a gunman at the Chico (California) airport four years ago, according to the San Francisco CHRONICLE. ... Lee A. Iverson has resigned as head of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School as of August 6, reports Bill Klontz, secretary of the Iowa Association of the Blind. No successor has yet been chosen for the school post. Iverson reportedly will take a new position in Illinois as administrator of five schools for children, including the Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School and the Illinois School for the Deaf. ...

Scientific news and information concerning America's space program is now available to legally blind persons with the publication of Selections from NASA Facts, 1962, in one volume press-braille. Copies of the braille edition may be obtained on loan from regional libraries for the blind, or purchased for 80 cents a copy from American Printing House for the Blind, 1839 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky. ... Luci Baines Johnson, the President's youngest daughter, has a part-time summer job helping a Washington optometrist with the visual training of patients. The teenager was reported by the Associated Press to be a patient herself since discovery that she "had a real eye problem that was impeding her reading." ...

Columbia University's Teachers College has announced the reinstatement of its program for the preparation of professional personnel in education of the blind and partially seeing. Study programs lead to the degrees of master of arts, doctor of philosophy, doctor of education and Teachers College professional diplomas. ... Mrs. Gertrude Suskind, a veteran of 34 years' service in education of the partially seeing, retired recently from her association with the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, THE NEW OUTLOOK reports. ...

An electric computer, worth \$2,000,000 was donated recently to the American Printing House for the Blind. The computer, a gift from International Business Machines Corporation, will translate inkprint into braille at the rate of more than 1,000 words a minute. ... For those blind persons who prefer the labeling method to shaking, smelling or tasting, a label-making machine is available from the Dymo Industries of Berkeley. The letter wheel on this machine contains both the letters of the alphabet and their matching braille symbols, so that a blind person can operate it by touch and a sighted person can use it to print braille labels.

The machine weighs eighteen ounces and can be purchased by a blind person at cost, \$29.00 and the tape costs 70 cents for a twelve-foot roll. ...

Robert Mahoney, a blind legislator from Michigan, said he has purchased a hunting license in order to emphasize the need for support of his bill to require inexperienced hunters to take a short course in gun safety before they can obtain licenses. ... The first Orthodox Jewish Prayer Book, issued in English and Hebrew Braille--containing daily, Sabbath and festival prayers--is now available at the Jewish Braille Institute, 48 E. 74th Street, New York City. The prayer books will be distributed to Jewish blind persons throughout the U.S., Canada, Israel, and other nations.

According to a notice in the National Braille Club's BULLETIN, telephone credit cards are now available in braille from most telephone companies. Also U. S. individual income tax return form 1040, with instructions, and form 1040A, are available in press-braille at the regional libraries for the blind. Order directly from the American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Kentucky. The price of form 1040 is \$2.20 and form 1040A, (short form) 40 cents.

Douglas C. MacFarland, until recently director of the Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped, has been appointed as chief of the Division of Services to the Blind of the Federal Rehabilitation Administration. MacFarland succeeds Lou Rives, who has been appointed to head up an agency-wide planning unit in VRA.

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#### LEGISLATIVE FLASH

On August 18 the Senate Finance Committee amended H. R. 9393 to extend the exemption of income and resources needed for a plan of self-support for blind aid recipients from one year to three years. Concurrence by the full Senate and House is anticipated.

The committee turned down an amendment by Senator Hardke which would have made federal medical care matching funds available for aid to the blind programs that are not under Title XVI of the Social Security Act, which would be equal to those now available under Title XVI. It is believed that Senator Hardke is considering

offering the same amendment on the floor of the Senate.

It is reliably reported that Senator Russell Long of Louisiana will offer an amendment to the Social Security bill on the Senate floor which will increase grants for aid to the blind and other categories by \$5.00 per month of federal funds with a condition that the states pass on the entire amount to aid recipients.

The resolution establishing October 15 as annual White Cane Safety Day has passed the House of Representatives and is reported to have favorable chances of passing the Senate before the Congress adjourns.

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